

University of Groningen

Martin & Emma investigate the Dutch dialect landscape

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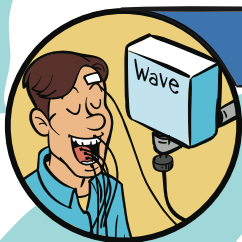
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MARTIN & EMMA



INVESTIGATE THE DUTCH DIALECT LANDSCAPE



A STORY BY MARTIJN WIELING

“Martin & Emma investigate the Dutch dialect landscape”

Drawings: Lorenzo Milito – www.lorenzomilito.com
Story: Martijn Wieling & Ruggero Montalto
Editing: Janneke Visser
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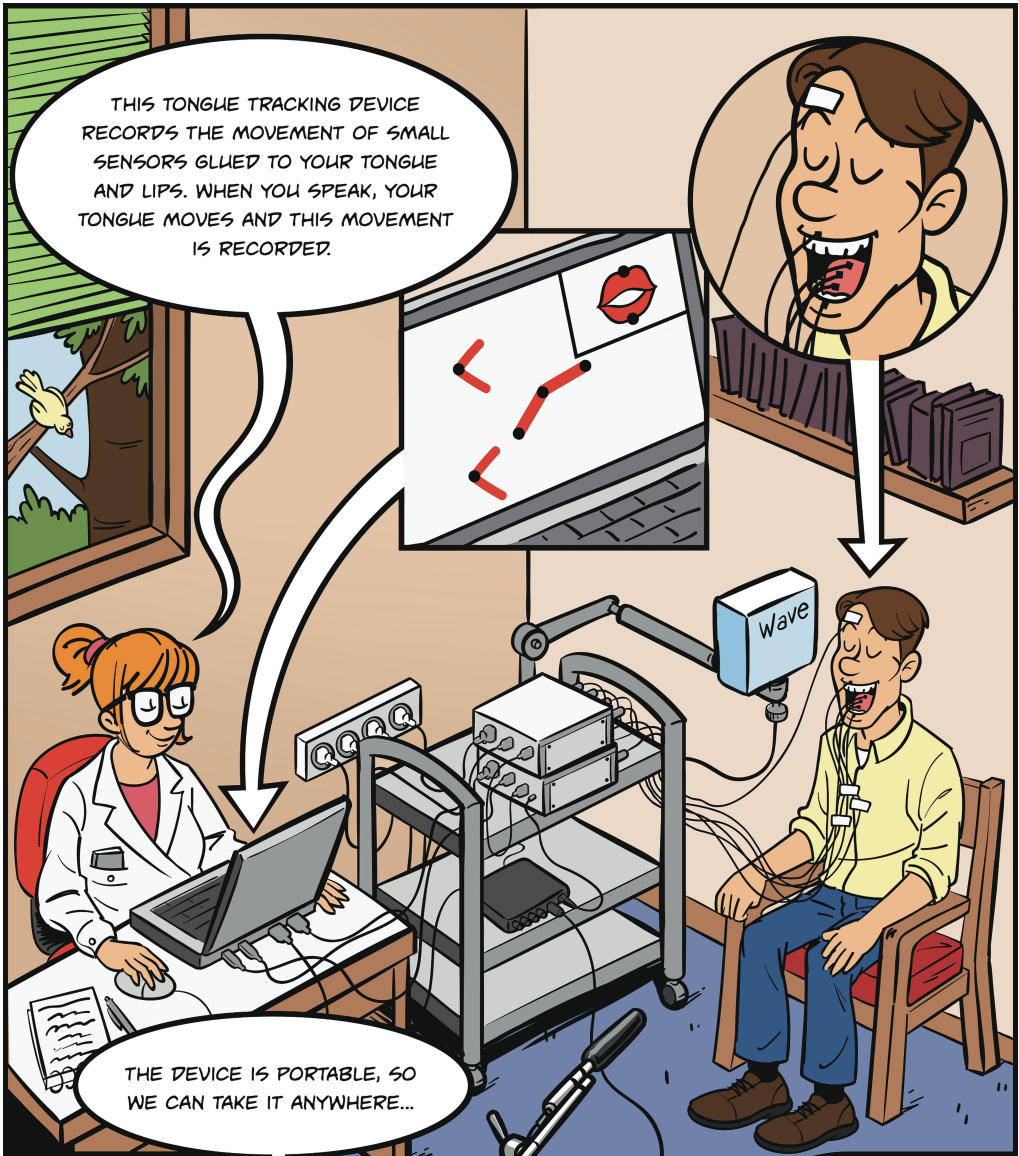
The Young Academy is an independent part of the
Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences

IN THE OFFICE OF RESEARCHERS
MARTIN AND EMMA AT THE UNIVERSITY...

DUTCH DIALECTS SOUND
VERY DIFFERENT FROM ONE ANOTHER.
DO YOU THINK THE DIFFERENCES
ARE VISIBLE IN SPEAKERS' TONGUE
MOVEMENTS, EMMA?

I DON'T KNOW, MARTIN.
LET'S FIND OUT WITH
OUR BRAND-NEW TONGUE
TRACKING DEVICE!





THIS TONGUE TRACKING DEVICE RECORDS THE MOVEMENT OF SMALL SENSORS GLUED TO YOUR TONGUE AND LIPS. WHEN YOU SPEAK, YOUR TONGUE MOVES AND THIS MOVEMENT IS RECORDED.

THE DEVICE IS PORTABLE, SO WE CAN TAKE IT ANYWHERE...

THEN LET'S TAKE IT TO TWO SCHOOLS TO CHECK FOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE LOCAL DIALECTS!



ON A MONDAY MORNING...

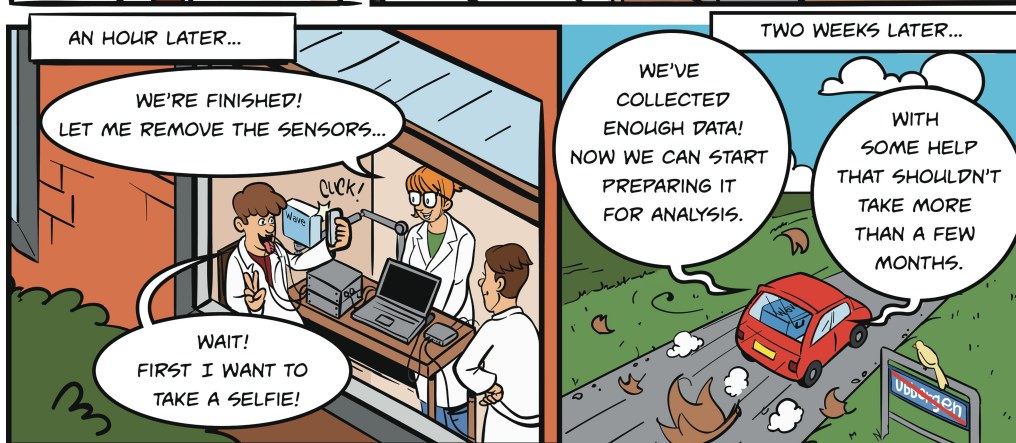
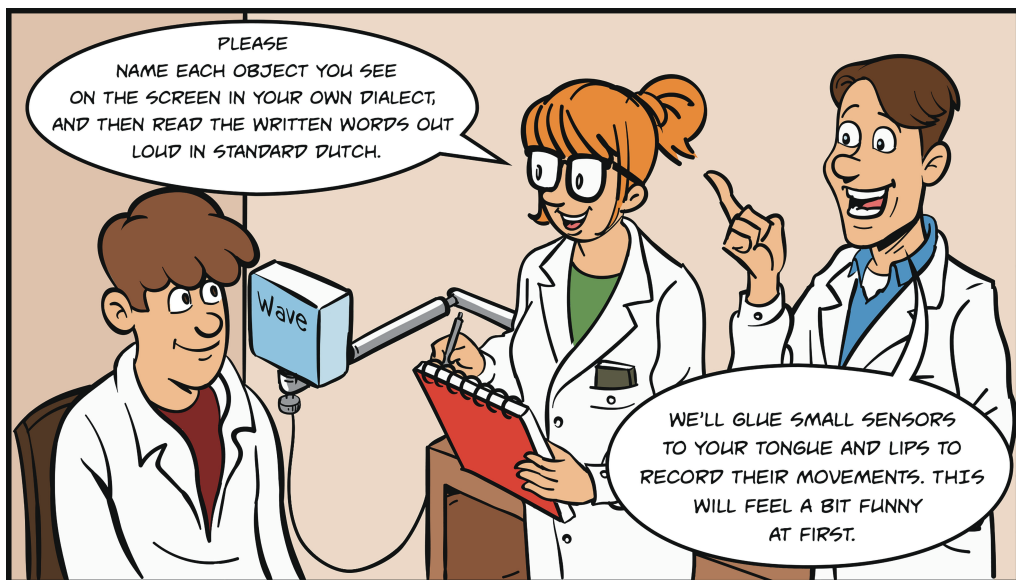
WE'LL BE HERE
FOR A WEEK. I HOPE WE GET
AT LEAST 15 PARTICIPANTS...

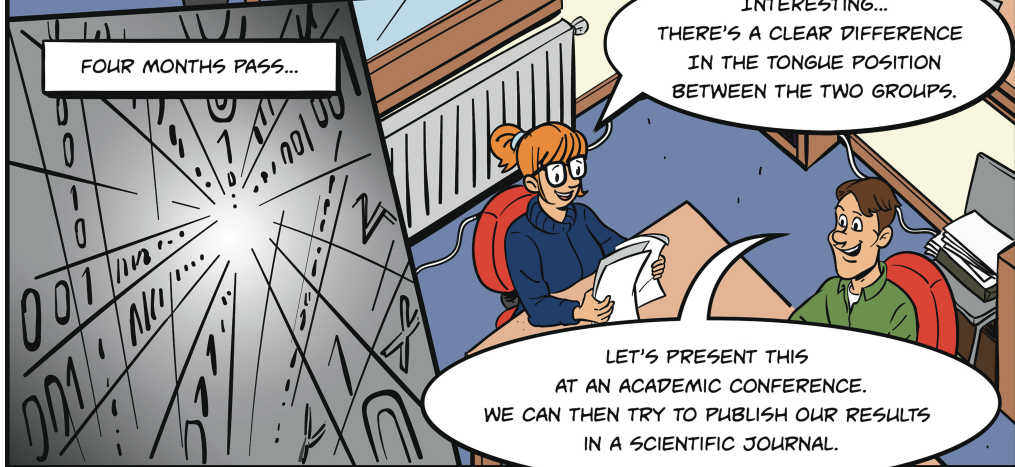
OF COURSE WE WILL!
WE'RE GIVING THEM 10 EUROS
AND A COOL PHOTO!

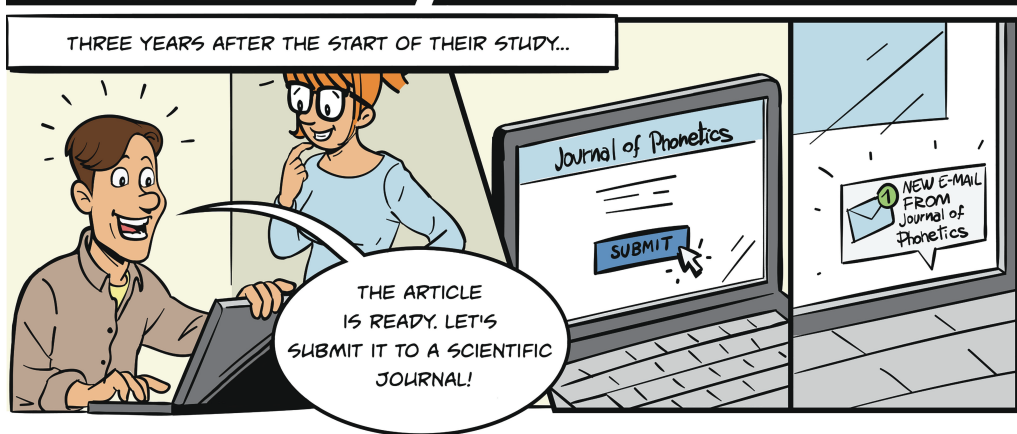
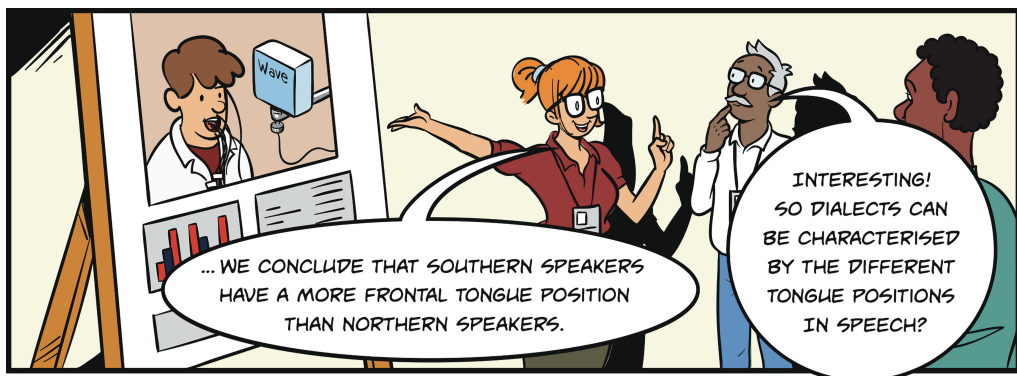
WE'LL NEED TO USE THE SAME
PROCEDURE FOR EVERYBODY, SO
OUR RESULTS ARE RELIABLE.

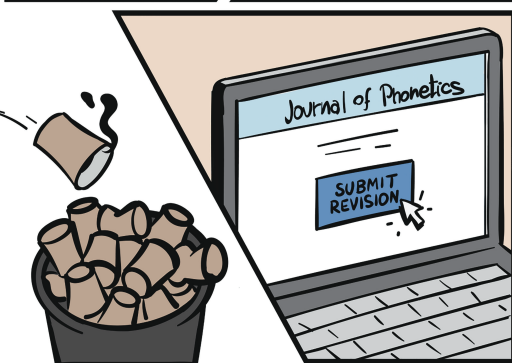
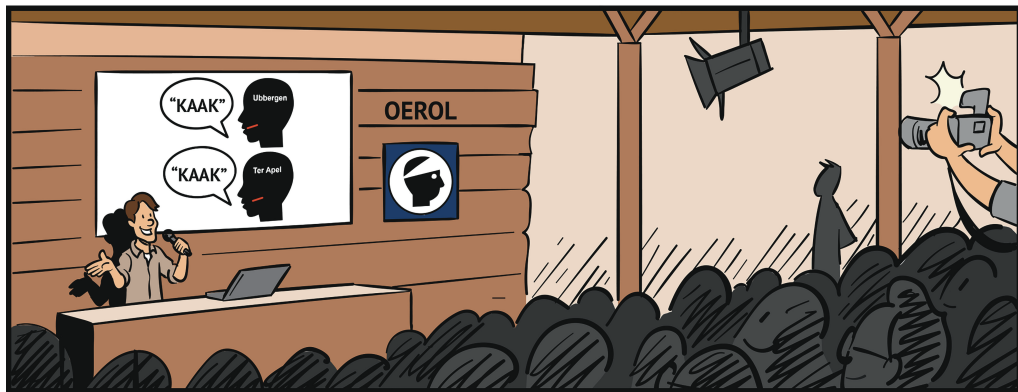
I THOUGHT THIS DEVICE
WAS PORTABLE...

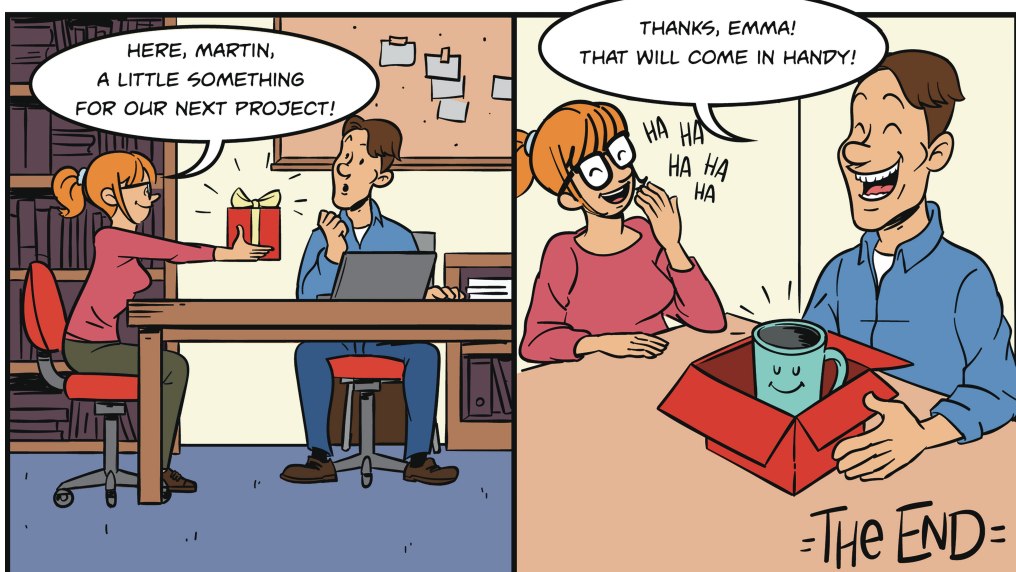
Wave













SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS



In this study, we recorded tongue movement data of two groups of approximately twenty Dutch high school students. We did this both in Ter Apel (province of Groningen) and Ubbergen (province of Gelderland). The students pronounced words in both their local dialect and in standard Dutch. Our measurements show that the students from Ter Apel position their tongue further back in their mouth than the students from Ubbergen. This difference is visible when the students speak their local dialect and when they speak standard Dutch. Even when the students were silent, in between the pronunciation of two subsequent words, the tongues of the students from Ter Apel were positioned further back. This is a new discovery. While we did know of the existence of differences in the position of the tongue comparing different languages, now we also know that this is possible for different dialects.

What is the use of this finding? The most important outcome of this study is that we have new knowledge about the differences between Dutch dialects. While the results of this study are not directly usable, this new knowledge might be beneficial for learning a new dialect or a foreign language.

For more information you can look at these websites:

<http://www.articulography.com> (movie about the experiment)

<http://goo.gl/B3N7AN> (newspaper article, in Dutch)

<http://www.martijnwieling.nl/publications> (scientific publications)

We thank the directors and the students of the HAVO Notre Dame des Anges in Ubbergen and the RSG Ter Apel for their help!

Martijn Wieling,

on behalf of all researchers involved in this study.



In this comic, you'll read how researchers Martin and Emma investigate Dutch dialects. They think the tongues of dialect speakers are very interesting. Do you want to know why? Then start reading quickly!

This comic was made possible by The Young Academy (DJA) of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) and is based on the research of Dr Martijn Wieling. Martijn Wieling is lecturer and researcher at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Groningen, and he is a member of The Young Academy. His research on Dutch dialects was financed by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) and was conducted in collaboration with Professor Harald Baayen at the University of Tübingen, Germany.

